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Bharati, Bhakta Interview

Abby Hicks

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Stockton Immigrant Women Oral History Collection

Interviewee: Bharati, Bhakta (Indian)

Interviewer: Abby Hicks

Transcribed by James Lyons, Jamie Lynn Culilap

[Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape, starting with questions, 1:11]

- Abby: How has staying in Stockton affected your family? How do you feel about the United States?
- Bhakta: Oh I like it here. It's nice. I don't want to go back now. I don't want to go back to you know India.
- Abby: How you traveled much here, in the United States?
- Bhakta: I've never been out of California. I just went to Reno though. Gamble.
- Abby: How was your luck?
- Bhakta: No luck.
- Abby: How about Disney land? Have you been down there?
- Bhakta: I've been there a lot of times. Cause of my aunt used to live down there so, when we had our summer vacations we used to go there.
- Abby: What do you think of it?
- Bhakta: Oh it's nice over there. Disney land is really nice, especially the rides, have you ever been there?
- Abby: Oh yeah.
- Bhakta: I like that show, you know they have that show, American, ah no, there's a clock I think, they have all the different kind of dogs in there, you know that show? You actually ride in a boat. You get to see all the music
- Abby: "It's a small world"
- Bhakta: Yeah, yeah "It's a small world, afterall." I like that, that's the best one. And like America the beautiful, you just stand there.

Abby: You turn around, that's bad how they do that.

Bhakta: Yeah, and San Francisco, you know that crooked street? They show you and you go like this, I like that one too.

Abby: Have you ever been to San Francisco? Do you have relatives there?

Bhakta: Um-hum. I have relatives there too. Ah-huh. Sometimes they come here or we go there.

Abby: Considering your life, what is the best age to be?

Bhakta: What is the best age to be? Un-married age.

Abby: What makes that the best age? I don't get how you can say that.

Bhakta: Well when you're married you're stuck right? When you're unmarried.

Abby: You had a choice like you said.

Bhakta: But still there's a difference, like now, there's a difference, you could go out with your friends and all that, you know. You know, responsibilities.

Abby: Would you like to live by yourself and be free from responsibilities?

Bhakta: Just by myself? No I wouldn't like to be by myself.

Abby: You wouldn't? Ok where is the worst place to be?

Bhakta: Old age.

Abby: You know, how would you know, you haven't experienced that?

Bhakta: Well I've seen a lot of old people. I think I'd rather die before I get old.

Abby: Can you think of sometimes when great chances happen that really change your time, or really give you new direction?

Bhakta: Yeah, now don't ask me what because it hasn't happened yet.

Abby: It hasn't come yet?

Bhakta: No, it hasn't come yet.

Abby: Did the depression, you've never had depression right?

Bhakta: No, should I?

Abby: No, so it never affected your life or your family?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Did any purchase made by your family affect your life.

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Are there government programs you particularly enjoy having?

Bhakta: Government?

Abby: Government programs.

Bhakta: What do you mean? What kind of programs?

Abby: Ah I don't know any programs?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Have you heard of women's liberation movement?

Bhakta: Oh yeah.

Abby: What do you think of it?

Bhakta: What do I think of it? Umm.

Abby: You've heard of it, I know you have.

Bhakta: Well

Abby: No comment?

Bhakta: No comment. I'd better not say anything.

Abby: Have any of the Stockton events really took you and your family?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Ok. That's it. Do you think it might change?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Did your mother work outside the home?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: While you were growing up. Ok. How about when you were in the United States. Do you know if she worked?

Bhakta: She doesn't work. She just stays in the house and does the house keeping. She works.

Abby: She did like picking things. How do you feel about your mothers working, what she did.

Bhakta: What she does here in the house? It's alright.

Abby: What kinds of things helped you adjust to this.

Bhakta: Huh?

Abby: Did you have any problems adjusting to your mom working while you were here?

Bhakta: ah.

Abby: Did your mom work back home?

Bhakta: No we had a maid over there. We didn't have to do anything over there. Nothing at all. And it was kind of hard when we came over here, we had to do everything, it was very hard.

Abby: How much does it cost, a maid over there?

Bhakta: It's not very expensive to get a maid.

Abby: And do you make her part of your family?

Bhakta: Oh yeah, when we had a maid, you know, he used to stay with us all the time. And when we go on vacation he comes too.

Abby: How come he didn't come here?

Bhakta: We can't afford to get him up here? It would cost what, a thousand dollars? To get him up here. And you know this is the United States, you might get you know, he might go somewhere else, he might leave us. Over there you don't have to worry about it.

Abby: How come?

Bhakta: Because he gets money from us, like you know we give him so much money and like that. But here it's free

Abby: Is it back at home is there no where he could really go? Are you saying that, or fight another job?

Bhakta: No

Abby: That would make him leave? Can you say that it was freer here? That would make him go?

Bhakta: Yeah because he might watch TV and whatever it was happening on the TV and you know like all this

Abby: But back at home he wouldn't have any influence that would make him change his mind?

Bhakta: No. Like some peoples come from India and they change, like you know they want to get out of they house and all those things.

Abby: Yeah I know. So the adjustment from not having a maid back at home and here it wasn't that hard of an adjustment was it?

Bhakta: Not having a maid? It was hard.

Abby: Was it that you had more choice here too?

Bhakta: What do you mean choice? We had to do everything?

Abby: Like the maid at home did it?

Bhakta: He used to do everything there, he mostly does the cooking also, so like mom, my mom, she didn't have to do anything. She probably just go for a shopping and get something.

Abby: How did you learn if he did it?

Bhakta: How did I learn?

Abby: Yeah, well you did.

Bhakta: I learned

Abby: Did you help him? Like with cooking?

Bhakta: No, I was small that time

Abby: I know, I guess you don't really start cooking till you're about 8 or 9

Bhakta: 8 or 9, that's too early, my sister is 18 years old and she doesn't know how to cook.

Abby: What?

Bhakta: You know the girl that you see. She doesn't know how to cook, maybe just a little bit, you know, but not everything.

Abby: Won't that affect her? Like when she decides to get married?

Bhakta: I know it's gonna be hard that's why mom and dad tried to keep telling her to learn to cook and all that.

Abby: What about you, you learned

Bhakta: Now I know how to cook.

Abby: Who taught you? Did you just pick it up?

Bhakta: Yeah, it's not hard to cook.

Abby: Well, you know like if your own meals

Bhakta: Well, at first you know maybe I put too much salt but now I mean not anymore.

Abby: Ok, how did you feel when you were leaving the old country.

Bhakta: Oh, I don't want to come back here. Cause all the friends were there and it was hard to leave all them. My aunt was there too. Everybody.

Abby: And your age throughout that period. Did your feelings change once you got here?

Bhakta: Ummhmm. Now I don't want to go back there.

Abby: How long was it adjusting here did you realize you don't want to go back?

Bhakta: Yeah, I'm used to it now so you know.

Abby: If you could would you go back?

Bhakta: I'd go back, not to live there but you know, just to visit.

Abby: What kinds of things did you expect to find in the United States. Did you have anything you were expecting when you got here?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: What did you think of it when you got here?

Bhakta: Well everything was kind of new so you know.

Abby: How's the you know the geography, is it hot where you were

Bhakta: It's very hard study.

Abby: You were saying you lived in a city?

Bhakta: Yeah, Bombay.

Abby: Isn't that a lot crowded?

Bhakta: Very crowded. Cause I went there 2 years ago. It's more now.

Abby: Did you expect to find it crowded here?

Bhakta: here? I don't know. I don't think so.

Abby: Was there anything in the United States that surprised you?

Bhakta: When I came here, yeah, school. Cause like all the little kids were smoking in the school and all that and they were living very free, you know like they could talk to the teacher, you talk back at them and we couldn't do that over there.

Abby: Yeah, it sounds like it's more stricker. How about anything else that surprised you. Economics or way of life style or anything?

Bhakta: Everything yeah.

Abby: Everything was new. Did your family settle in Stockton when they first

Bhakta: Pittsburg

Abby: Did your family settle with family or relatives from the old country? When they were in Pittsburg? When you were in Pittsburg did you settle with other family?

Bhakta: Um-hmm. Yeah they were there, well not really we didn't have relatives over there but just my dad's friends, like you know they're Indian too so we met people over there.

Abby: Did you live in a neighborhood mostly with people from rural countries?

Bhakta: No. Well it's a hotel so you cannot find a neighborhood.

Abby: What other groups were present? Ethnic groups, were present? Ok when you say, when you lived by a hotel basically where all just business so that you can't really say that you lived in a neighborhood. Well about other businesses. Were there other hotels around?

Bhakta: No I think there was only one there and they had some kind of, I don't know, business down.

Abby: Did you find that hard? When you went to school. Did you take the bus or what?

Bhakta: No, my brother he used to drop us off there.

Abby: And then pick you up?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: So you couldn't really stay after school because you had to come home right afterward. So who did you play with?

Bhakta: Play with?

Abby: Or associate with in your age group?

Bhakta: Oh, I had a friend over there too.

Abby: That lived around there? Or are you talking about school?

Bhakta: Yeah at school.

Abby: Um, did your family encounter any problems when you got here?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: What did you, or your family members, do about, they didn't have any problems?

Bhakta: What kind of problems do you expect?

Abby: I don't know, I would think there could be a lot of problems with coming over, maybe you couldn't get through immigration.

Bhakta: Oh no, nothing like that.

Abby: Your brother took good care easily. Took care about making sure you arrived here?

Bhakta: There wasn't any problem.

Abby: Ok. If there was could you turn to somebody, to others, for help?

Bhakta: Of course.

Abby: What if, who would it probably be?

Bhakta: Relatives.

Abby: What language was spoken at home?

Bhakta: [Kutheraki?]

Abby: Say that again?

Bhakta: [Kutheraki?]

Abby: Is that one of the native languages in India?

Bhakta: Yeah. Well there's a lot of different languages in India.

Abby: Yeah, but they have like 10 main native, like native stuff. I know there are like 200, there are so many, but is it one of the main ones?

Bhakta: Oh I don't know, you got me. I know that the one main one is Hindi.

Abby: Did English ever become the main language at home?

Bhakta: In the house? No.

Abby: When did, ok what language was spoken in the neighborhood?

Bhakta: English. Oh here or are you talking about in India or here?

Abby: Here, when you first came to the United States.

Bhakta: English.

Abby: Who lived in the household during your growing up years?

Bhakta: Who did what?

Abby: Who lived in the household during your growing up years?

Bhakta: I don't know what you mean.

Abby: Parents, Uncles, or aunts or siblings.

Bhakta: Parents.

Abby: Did you have grandparents or uncles living with you?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: How many , 5 you said?

Bhakta: It was my mom and dad, 5, and my one brother, that's 6, and another one was here, he's been here now what 20, gosh 20 years I think.

Abby: What does he do?

Bhakta: He's got a business over there in Arizona.

Abby: Did you ever live at home or relatives or board with another family.

Bhakta: No.

Abby: When you came here?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Ok. How did your parents feel about having other families stay over

Bhakta: We had a lot of them like that, like my mom's brother, he came to stay with us and I don't know they're different from my dad's sides relatives, they don't usually come to stay with us.

Abby: How did you feel about that?

Bhakta: Oh me? It's alright, we got used to it. We had a lot of guests

Abby: Back at home

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: You had people coming in and out?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Did the children have regular chores? This is when you first came to the United States

Bhakta: We had what?

Abby: Regular chores.

Bhakta: Chores?

Abby: Chores, duties

Bhakta: Oh, no.

Abby: Ok, can you tell me about what expected of the children in your family? Like, if you didn't have any chores what was expected of you?

Bhakta: I don't know what my dad or mom expect, but I guess we had to be nice and we cannot go out like after what ah, we had to be home by 11, no more than like 11.

Abby: Did they let you out?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Go out with girls alone or by yourself?

Bhakta: Well at that time I was kinda small but here yeah. We used to go out with the friends and all that.

Abby: How about guys? Guy friends?

Bhakta: If we go out with a guy I wouldn't tell my dad we were hanging out, with my boyfriend or something like that.

Abby: So you just said you were going out with your girlfriends?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Ok, well while you were here you didn't have any chores like maybe cooking or washing dishes?

Bhakta: Well, you know my mom, we do the washing dishes, on the weekends we were easy huh, we help make beds.

Abby: Well what about your brother?

Bhakta: Oh yeah they do everything. All the repair works, he would work in the swimming pool, or in the garden, everything like that.

Abby: Did you help him or was that mainly just the guys' work?

Bhakta: Sometimes I help.

Abby: Not much?

Bhakta: It's their work; they're supposed to do it.

Abby: I assume it's some fun working in the garden.

Bhakta: My dad usually works in the garden. I don't know anything about that.

Abby: Just put a seed in.

Bhakta: No, I would probably water it at night, you know.

Abby: Ok, did you ever work in a job outside of home when you were growing up?

Bhakta: Yep.

Abby: Can you tell me about it? About the work?

Bhakta: Well my first job, I was in tenth grade. I was kind of surprised that I got a job because it was my first pay check. And my dad, he was kind of surprised too, that I was working.

Abby: What was it?

Bhakta: I was, ah working with old people, in a residence home. My sister, she works there now but I was working there and then I got her job over there too, and then all my friends, they started working there too so now we were all working, serving the um, the patients, in the dining room.

Abby: How long were you there for?

Bhakta: About a year.

Abby: What made you quit?

Bhakta: Oh, I got tired and wanted to do something else, I wanted to get another job.

Abby: What was it?

Bhakta: Oh it was another one, I had a job in a hospital. I was working part time but I didn't like it either.

Abby: Is that what got you into nursing? Was working with people?

Bhakta: Yeah. But then I didn't like it. I don't know why, I can't get used to it.

Abby: Working now?

Bhakta: When I was working with the patients. I didn't like that.

Abby: Were you helping them clean up?

Bhakta: Yeah. All that.

Abby: That's a lot of work. A lot of stuff to do.

Bhakta: Yeah I hate that. Now I like my job. You know as an a medical assistant.

Abby: Can you go on like that?

Bhakta: No, but I want to do something else.

Abby: Right, become a nurse, no?

- Bhakta: No, I don't want to become a nurse. Then you still have to be with the patient and all that.
- Abby: Well what else can you do with a medical...
- Bhakta: Oh I would probably want to be in a laboratory or something.
- Abby: God that would take a lot of biology. Science. Did you work for a person from your own country?
- Bhakta: Did I work with a person from my own country?
- Abby: When you were in your old country, did you work?
- Bhakta: Oh no.
- Abby: What was it like to be supervised by an adult when you got your job?
- Bhakta: When I got my job I was happy.
- Abby: You didn't mind having someone tell you what to do?
- Bhakta: That's hard. Well. I was working for them so I have to do what they tell me right? So, that's it. I can't say anything. And that was my first job too. But now it's alright. I know what it's like up here.
- Abby: Did you talk much? I mean with interact with the people when you worked? Your first job? I would think you would be afraid to. When I got my first job I was afraid to.
- Bhakta: They're all old people, and you know, they want someone to talk to. So you know.
- Abby: Oh that's true.
- Bhakta: They were really nice too. I used to just work Saturdays and Sundays, and in the morning because I used to go to school on weekdays, so that's the time I had, on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Abby: Did you used to have any duties that you didn't like?
- Bhakta: Washing dishes.
- Abby: Are you talking about your job or here?
- Bhakta: Here too. And job too, I had to wash dishes too, every once and a while. When I started working on the weekdays they needed someone to start washing dishes.
- Abby: They didn't have any dish washer?
- Bhakta: Oh, they had a dish washer too, but they had to have someone check those dishes.

Abby: How did you respond to this.

Bhakta: Huh?

Abby: How did you react to it? How did you respond to this?

Bhakta: “Eww, yuck.” I didn’t want to wash dishes at times, but what can I do? I had to do it.

Abby: Is it bad now?

Bhakta: Oh no, not anymore. Now I’m used to it.

Abby: You hadn’t done it before?

Bhakta: No, I hadn’t done it before, that’s why. Like, you know, we used to have a maid and all that. He used to do the dishes and all that. Everything.

Abby: Anything else that you disliked, that you didn’t like about the job?

Bhakta: Wash, clean the toilets.

Abby: The grudy jobs.

Bhakta: What?

Abby: The grudy jobs.

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: What kind of home did you live in when you arrived in the United States?

Bhakta: It’s apartment.

Abby: Ok, how many, was it a large apartment?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: As big as this one?

Bhakta: It’s bigger than this one.

Abby: Did you live in one of the apartments. You lived in one of the apartments, how many rooms did it have?

Bhakta: Let’s see, 2, our owns right?

Abby: Your own, right.

Bhakta: We had 1, 2, 3, 4.

Abby: Did you ever move?

Bhakta: Move? Yeah.

Abby: What was your move from home like?

Bhakta: Stuffy. It was too small.

Abby: Was the first too big? Were there too many rooms?

Bhakta: Yeah but we used other rooms. Like, you know, outside. We had all this room. And I had my own room over there. Downstairs.

Abby: Out there?

Bhakta: I mean, you know how you have the unit, we have the room, we could use one of the rooms from the hotel.

Abby: This one is then like, what, the main living room?

Bhakta: Yeah, this is the living room.

Abby: Who made the main family decisions?

Bhakta: My dad.

Abby: Did your parents together make decisions?

Bhakta: Umhmm.

Time stamp- 28:29

Abby: What influence did your mother have on deciding things about the family?

Bhakta: I guess she was probably kind of used to it. You know in my dad he gone with me to [decide you know]

Abby: I mean did your parents ever disagree on things?

Bhakta: They probably do disagree on something.

Abby: Did she play a big part? Your mother?

Bhakta: No. My father did, not my mother.

Abby: Was she allowed to say what she felt?

Bhakta: Yeah, she says.

Abby: But the part of the decision is the father.

Abby: How were you disagree with them? Since your parents did disagree. Suppose your mother really felt strongly about something. How would they handle that?

Bhakta: Hmm I don't know. We had any of these kind of problems I mean, you know.

Abby: Like American people there (laughs)

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Okay so you couldn't say. Did you ever disagree with your parents about things?

Bhakta: Probably a lot of things.

Abby: Could you tell me about some of them?

Bhakta: I don't remember anything right now. I better not say anything (laughs)

Abby: Could you tell me what you would usually do?

Bhakta: If I could disagree?

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: I just laughed, and I just leave the room.

Abby: Go to your bedroom or...?

Bhakta: Yeah. Go in my room.

Abby: Did you talk about it with anybody or?

Bhakta: Yeah and then my dad he, you know, he agrees afterwards. After a little while.

Abby: What if any customs or practice from your old country did you observe at home? Religious, rituals... did you um practice?

Bhakta: Any customs right?

Abby: Mhmm like, did you practice religious.

Bhakta: What countries are you talking about? Any country?

Abby: From the old country that you're from.

Bhakta: Oh everything.

Abby: So you do have religious rituals? Meaning that you still practice.

Bhakta: Yeah like praying and all.

Abby: []

Bhakta: Mhmm same thing.

Abby: Do you eat meat?

Bhakta: I used to but now I stopped since two months.

Abby: What happened?

Bhakta: Because this lady, you know, she made me quit any meat and she kept telling me it's not all good and all that. And I believed her, and I fast every Friday okay?

Abby: Right.

Bhakta: And she said 'you fasting every Friday like that and you believe in God' and all that you know, and she need me to not. And I was like 'okay' and I stopped eating meat.

Abby: What about the rest of your family?

Bhakta: Ooh my mom and dad, they are really strict. They do not even allow any kind of meat in the house.

Abby: What about here and your family? Your husband?

Bhakta: Oh he eats everything except beef.

Abby: Chicken and meat?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: When you say praying, is that more or less your own individual prayer?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: You don't have, you know, ceremonial or..?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Or go like on Sundays to church?

Bhakta: No no no.

Abby: What about ceremonies? Do you have any of those?

Bhakta: No ceremonies. Well I don't know, my dad used to pray in the mornings and in the evenings. Mom and dad have to pray. But I guess I only prayer on Friday.

Abby: But of all days, Friday?

Bhakta: Why? Because I am doing something. I fast Friday and I pray in the morning.

Abby: How about children games? Did you have children games?

Bhakata: Games?

Abby: That you play here.

Bhakta: That we brought..

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: Yeah we used to have these [Karum] brought that game with us.

Abby: What is that?

Bhakta: [Karum] It's like a pool, like how you play pool. But you don't hit it with a stick. You play with your fingers.

Abby: Oh you had the ground.

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Superstitions you had?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Yeah like the Chinese they have superstitions.

Bhakta: Yeah. I don't believe in that.

Abby: They have the Gods right?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: They have the different names?

Bhakta: Uh huh. Don't ask me which ones (Abby laughs), because I don't know.

Abby: What is the name?? The name.

Bhakta: The one that everyone believes is the [Christener]

Abby: Is he here? Or there?

Bhakta: Yeah it's the needle one over there.

Abby: Did most people have them?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: What group did you belong to while growing up?

Bhakta: What do you mean, what group?

Abby: Uhh groups. Did you have your own groups. It doesn't say what kind of groups (laughs)

Bhakta: Oh so some other... like participate in something else?

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Were your family mostly the same religious and ethnics background?

Bhakta: []

Abby: Did you and your friends often relate to play with children of other background?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Did your parents object to that?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: I think the type of groups they're talking about are ethnic groups.

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Basically where there... [] white, Mexican, or ..?

Bhakta: I think I would probably say Mexican or Filipino?

Abby: Or was that in Pittsburg or here?

Bhakta: Oh in Pittsburg it was black. In here it's Mexican and white and Filipino. They're all three.

Abby: Did you ever bring your friends home, as visitors?

Bhakta: Yeah. All the time they come.

Abby: How did your parents feel about visitors or friends from another culture.

Bhakta: They don't mind. You know, if they come here then uh..

Abby: Did your parents say any rules about dating.

Bhakta: Dating... a guy?

(laughs)

Bhakta: I wouldn't dare asking them. They would kick me out of the house!

Abby: You talking about your father?

Bhakta: Yeah, I'm talking about my father. My mother is alright.

Abby: You talk about it with her?

Bhakta: Yeah. She's better than my dad. In one way I like my dad, like, he makes decisions. I mean it's good, because like if you mess around like these... actions (laughs)

Abby: This is not going anywhere.

Bhakta: Okay you know how like, white people they go on dates and then they get mixed up with all these things. Like they might get pregnant and something you know.

Abby: You say you can talk to your mother? Like how much? Like to the point that you could retell everything to her or just a certain amount. Who you have dated. Could you talk to her about that?

Bhakta: If I talk to her she's going to talk to my dad, because I wouldn't talk to her. But if I talk to her, I know she's going to tell my dad.

Abby: Yeah so you can't really... you can't really say much.

Bhakta: Mhmm Not about the dates. I could tell her everything, but not about that.

Abby: Oh so you go out with the guy?

Bhakta: No with the girls. Not supposed to go out with the guys you know. My friends. And usually they know all my friends because they come here.

Abby: Did you ever go out with friends... then go out with the guy?

Bhakta: No (laughs)

Abby: Okay, did your parents have anything to do with who you married?

Bhakta: Who I married? Yeah. The same like you know, Indian guy. He has to be Indian.

Abby: How about the [cast]?

Bhakta: Yeah the [cast].

Abby: And you got married here or in [India]?

Bhakta: No I went there to get married.

Abby: Was it ever difficult for kids in your country to grow up in Stockton?

Bhakta: No I don't think so.

Abby: How about you or your friends?

Bhakta: []

Abby: Were there especially good things about growing up in Stockton?

Bhakta: Stockton I think is better than Pittsburg because there we do [have a place in standing] but I don't really know. But here I have all the friends and we used to

go out and all that and dating and you know being in the park and []. Bowling and all that. I think I like Stockton better than Pittsburg. First I didn't want to move, because I was used to it over there you know. I told my dad we don't want to move, but we moved and after about a one year we don't want to move anywhere else. We wanted to stay here.

Abby: What is it, the activities? More things to do?

Bhakta: Yeah activity and everything. Now I'm really used to this town.

Abby: It's the people? Or...?

Bhakta: Hmm the people too yeah...

Abby: Was it helpful to have brother and sisters when you were growing up?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Do you talk to them?

Bhakta: Well my brother like, he [just] have this study you know. Especially I took this class drawing. I never drawing, he always drawing with the paint and everything.

Abby: Was that at delta?

Bhakta: No I was in the high school.

Abby: Did you and your classmates have the same ethnic background? This is in school.

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Did most of your classmates speak English? You saying, wait a minute, ethnic background means... your group. Your kind.

Bhakta: Like Indians.

Abby: Indians, yeah.

Bhakta: Oh I don't have any Indian friends here. Well I do but we never entered the same high school. Not in the school no. Not any Indians.

Abby: Okay, most of them spoke English. Did you speak English?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Okay. How about other children from your country, did they speak English.

Bhakta: I don't know them, there wasn't anybody.

Abby: Did anyone ever think you were Mexican or..?

Bhakta: Oh a lot of them think I'm Mexican!

Abby: What did, did you tell them or...?

Bhakta: They just start talking to me in Spanish, and I say I don't understand Spanish. Even [today] a lot of them talk Spanish .

Abby: Do you usually tell them that you are Indian?

Bhakta: I just say I don't speak Spanish and then they ask me, what you speaking and all that.

Abby: Are they surprised or...?

Bhakta: They know a lot of Indians now so.

Abby: Did the teacher appear to come from a different background from yours?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: How did you learn to speak English?

Bhakta: Oh I learned English classes over there so.

Abby: As you recall now, did the teacher seem able to handle languages different from other children? Language differences. You know like if there were another Spanish or someone who couldn't speaking English.

Bhakta: I don't know it kind of depends what kind of teacher. If they don't know how to speak Spanish or any other language, then it's going to be hard for the teacher right?

Abby: You didn't run into that?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: How about others stemming from your background? []

Bhakta: My background?

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: Hmm. []

Abby: Was it seem like another [American English person]. Because you do English right?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: []

Bhakta: Oh here. There are all kinds of people. But when I was in Pittsburg it's a small town okay. So they were all surprised. Just for seeing different kind of []. So they wanna know, some more about me.

Abby: Did she ever ask you? To the class?

Bhakta: Yeah. Mhmm.

Abby: Did you recall any funny incident while in school?

Bhakta: Hmm. Oh yeah, one thing. That was in Pittsburg okay not here. I was just new over there. You know what they give, the [provisional]? If you get an F or something like that, okay most of the people got that [provisional] okay and I didn't get one. And so I stand up and I asked the teacher 'How come I didn't get one of that?' and she said 'Well that's provisional, you don't get one because you don't have an F or anything like that. I was really shaming because I was asking for [provisional]!' (Laughs)

Abby: Did a lot of the girls get it too?

Bhakta: Mhmm and it was a man's class.

Abby: Ah I see, got it. Probably a likable subject there.

Bhakta: Yeah. From then I know what that look like then. I think it was a warning when you get a D or, that's what it is maybe.

Abby: Means that you're not passing the level.

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Was there anything about going to school in the United States.

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Okay what was your family's attitude toward here?

Bhakta: Attitude... []

Abby: Did they want you to go to school?

Bhakta: Oh yeah. My dad still wants me to go to school too. He doesn't want me to, you know, just continue. But I wouldn't work see.

Abby: How about your mother?

Bhakta: Oh she doesn't mind.

Abby: What about you?

Bhakta: Yeah I would want to go back to school too.

Abby: To get a [] something like that.

Bhakta: To get something out of it, you know, I don't want to work as a medical assistant all my life. I want to do something else. I don't want to be a nurse though. I'd probably do a I don't know-

Abby: Get a BA.

Bhakta: Yeah but I would have to major in something.

Abby: []

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Did your parents try to help you with [] at school?

Bhakta: Oh yeah when I was in 9th grade over there. My dad used to help me.

Abby: In what?

Bhakta: In everything. If I don't know anything, you know, I just ask him and all that.

Abby: Could you rely on anyone else to help you?

Bhakta: Mhmm. My brother.

Abby: Does your brother like your sister? Your sister was young.

Bhakta: She's younger than me. My brother he's older than me so yeah.

Abby: What things were really hard for you?

Bhakta: In school?

Abby: Was it learning the slang language or?

Bhakta: Um. I know, okay when I came here I knew little English okay.

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: But I wasn't really speaking that much on you know their religion. So it was you know... A little hard to speak. And I just got used to it.

Abby: Did that kind of shy you from not talking? Or did it make you more want to talk?

Bhakta: Well I just talk. I know I wasn't saying the right things and I can't just -

[Tape 2, Side B]

Bhakta: no not her, she got a big mouth (laughs) but the middle one she's in [Tennessee] right now. So that one-

Abby: So where she doing there?

Bhakta: Tennessee.

Abby: What she doing back there?

Bhakta: She married too.

Abby: Oh okay. How old is she?

Bhakta: She's 20 years old.

Abby: She got married what age?

Bhakta: 20.

Abby: Isn't it hard? To have family separated?

Bhakta: Hmm?

Abby: Is that hard on you? Or your [parents]?

Bhakta: When I got married?

Abby: No um, separate.

Bhakta: Oh yeah, it's hard. Now I don't want to go away you know like right now I'm staying with my parents till I'm married. It's two years now.

Abby: Officially you don't want to move?

Bhakta: Yeah no I have to move. Like my sister did she had to move you know. But you see right now, my husband is working here and I'm working here too in Stockton so we just stay with my parents and one of the days I know I'm going to move and then like right now I don't have to pay any bills or anything like that, and I know it's going to be hard when I move.

Abby: Yeah what's worser, yeah.

Bhakta: Yeah. So we gotta clear our money too so you know.

Abby: What did your parents suspect you to marry to?

Bhakta: Uh I don't know. Oh my dad he wanted me to you know, be a nurse. But I don't... I took these classes at Delta too but I didn't like it. I mean, nursing, I don't know I... It's hard. Nursing. I can see those people you know, like because I work in the [cumbersome] hospital and then [let's see I didn't want to get married].

Abby: How come your father wanted you to get married? Was it something that...

Bhakta: He said it's nice you know, this your nurse. He said it's nice to be a nurse.

Abby: To be helpful, yeah.

Bhakta: You help the people and...

Abby: How about your other sister?

Bhakta: Oh my younger- the middle one, he didn't expect anything (laugh). She's kind of, you know, shy. She wouldn't even go out and talk and all that.

Abby: Is she that shy?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: And your brother?

Bhakta: Hmm my brother got his own business now, other brother he is in London.

Abby: What's he doing? Working there?

Bhakta: No they are on vacation right now.

Abby: oh.

Bhakta: []

Abby: Okay so he is still good with your brother and-

Bhakta: He? No.

Abby: Okay did you participate in school activities when you were here?

Bhakta: Hmm.

Abby: You played a sport or here?

Bhakta: Nope.

Abby: Did you ever take classes at the YMCA or classes outside- [] was there any other places you took classes in?

Bhakta: Yeah [wooder].

Abby: What's it called?

Bhakta: [wooder]

Abby: Mhmm that's where you got your [residence]. Were these activities helpful to you as you were growing up?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Wait a minute-

Bhakta: Wait uh, what activities are you talking about –

Abby: Wait wait wait a minute I'm talking-

Bhakta: talking about school-

Abby: talking about school activities. Did you ever go-

Bhakta: Yeah that's I think I didn't-

Abby: to student clubs and yeah-

Bhakta: No no. Not that. I thought you were probably asking me about this school-

Abby: Yeah that's what I thought.

Bhakta: that I did.

Abby: Yeah, no I mean any activities, okay. Did you tend to participate in neighborhood or church activities?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Were there special activities for your age group that you did?

Bhakta: []

Abby: How far did you go in school?

Bhakta: In high school?

Abby: High school, and then you got 2 years at Delta you say?

Bhakta: 1 year.

Abby: 1 year. And then you took [] okay so you got your nurse- assistant.

Bhakta: Hmm?

Abby: Okay you know where you got your um-

Bhakta: Nurse assistant?

Abby: nurse assistant, what age do you have to be to be a nurse assistant?

Bhakta: To be a nurse assistant?

Abby: Well you went to that school?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: How old do you have to be?

Bhakta: Uh 18.

Abby: So that more or less anybody could go.

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: And there was a cost in [play]?

Bhakta: No it was free.

Abby: Oh it's free. So how did you learn... learn how-

Bhakta: How did I learn what?

Abby: about the program?

Bhakta: Oh because in high school they ask us we have to like, I have enough credits to graduate. I graduated early, so I went to Delta while I was going to the high school too. And then I found out about these because the counselor did talk to us and if you wanna go, join the school and all that.

Abby: And so you took the class-

Bhakta: I took the classes over there too.

Abby: You took it after Delta?

Bhakta: Yeah at the Delta.

Abby: But were you still in high school?

Bhakta: Yeah when I was going to Delta, yeah.

Abby: How did you end up with so much credit?

Bhakta: I went to summer school.

Abby: Oh I see.

Bhakta: See, I had to- I finished all of my like a one [acres] I finished in summer school, like, you know,[] American history and all that. I took it in summer school. So I had my credit. You know units so.

Abby: Is this the amount of education you hope you would have?

Bhakta: Hmm?

Abby: Is the amount of education you hope you would have?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: You want [] more?

Bhakta: More.

Abby: During your years in high school did your family give you some [independence] in certain ways?

Bhakta: Obviously my own way.

Abby: Like what?

Bhakta: Whatever I want to do you know, it's alright with them. They won't say anything.

Abby: Like if you wanted to be like a cheerleader [] they don't mind?

Bhakta: Yeah they don't mind anything.

Abby: As to relate to school?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: They didn't mind. How did you feel about your family in those years, in high school?

Bhakta: (laughs)

Abby: No change?

Bhakta: No change.

Abby: Did you parents spoke English?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Was it difficult for you when your friends were present in your home?

Bhakta: No. No my dad he, just jokes around with my friends and they like my dad too you know.

Abby: He sounds like a [goo] character. Did you have any special hopes or ambitions or are you []?

Bhakta: When I was in school I wanted to be a nurse, let me tell you. (laughs) but when I went to work as a nurse assistant, I said no I changed my mind. I don't want to be a nurse anymore.

Abby: Isn't that hard then you gotta figure out, or what do I want to do?

Bhakta: No I wouldn't I don't know what I want to do you know (laughs)

Abby: It's good to help you achieve then?

Bhakta: What? Not really.

Abby: Not really. It's good to help you to understand life in the United States.

- Bhakta: You know it's [] when you go to school and you learn all these new things everyday.
- Abby: Do things how... other kids-
- Bhakta: Yeah.
- Abby: Was there anything that you felt confused about when you heard or learned about the US in the school?
- Bhakta: Hmm, I don't know... Like would confused?
- Abby: Mhmm. That you learn or something while you were in school.
- Bhakta: ...
- Abby: From like back home, there must been different since one of your school and [] here.
- Bhakta: Well here it's like, it's too easy to study. You know, like, over there it's kind of hard because they don't grade you like A, B, C. It's like a number, like, okay, like you 24 students in a class okay. So you get a number like when you take exam and the who has the high score, that's number 1, number 2, number 3 like that. It's not A, B, C. Like so no one gets number 1, only 1 person out of 24 is going to get number 1. So it's nothing... I don't know I forgot all these things. But you know it's like that and here it's easy. It's A, B, C, D and F. You know, it's very easy to pass.
- Abby: Competition wasn't hard...
- Bhakta: Over there it's very hard.
- Abby: Anything else that was different or confusing.
- Bhakta: Hmm well.
- Abby: School system is like you go 5 days.
- Bhakta: Oh no you go Saturday over there too.
- Abby: Oh really?
- Bhakta: Saturday half day. Only Sunday is off.
- Abby: Most of the people walk over there to the school?
- Bhakta: Bus.
- Abby: Bus, ok[.].
- Bhakta: School bus. And uh, some of them comes in from the [train] []

- Abby: Do some of them stay afterschool?
- Bhakta: Oh no.
- Abby: I thought maybe if they came from long distance or maybe..
- Bhakta: No there's a train [].
- Abby: Alright we going to talk about the difference between the life you came to the United States of America and growing up as a child. Are [the customs] celebrated at your home when you were [celebrating your children's home]. Child celebrating your children's home.
- Bhakta: Children's home...
- Abby: Okay um. When you were a child... you can't really answer that question (laughs). Forget that one, okay are the food the same?
- Bhakta: Mhmm.
- Abby: You have the same food when you're growing up.
- Bhakta: Yeah.
- Abby: -in here in the United States. How about the holidays? Are the same holidays celebrated?
- Bhakta: No. No. We have this, like, we are Christianers like, [up there we call it []]. That comes in November, so that's a New Years, that's you know, our New Years, so we celebrate that. Well we celebrate Christmas too you know, buy all the presents for everybody and all that. Um [its just like a that one]. A lot of them I don't even remember a lot.
- Abby: You have a lot of dinners? Like Thanksgiving, we have Thanksgiving dinners.
- Bhakta: No we don't believe in that.
- Abby: Did your children help each other with home responsibilities?
- Bhakta: Did... what?
- Abby: Did you- You kind of answered this... did you... um. We did that, ten minutes ago. Okay how you felt close to the old country?
- Bhakta: Close to... my country?
- Abby: Mhmm. This is, what is life here like for people from your country. Do you feel closer to your country?
- Bhakta: Yeah.
- Abby: Like what you- how do you-

Bhakta: It depends, what language they are speaking too you see.

Abby: Do you still associate with friend from-

Bhakta: From India?

Abby: Indian.

Bhakta: Yeah I do.

Abby: But, like letters or... see how things are going?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Did you do [letters]?

Bhakta: I didn't do that, I'm lazy to write a letter to know that. But my dad does, my husband does it. He writes letters to his friends and family and all that.

Abby: Is his family there or here?

Bhakta: There.

Abby: []

Bhakta: []

Abby: Are you in contact with relatives or friends here too? Do you feel you are affected by what happens there?

Bhakta: Yeah. They write you know up here too.

Abby: How much to a certain extent, how more or less, how long are you affected? To the point do they ask you [] or do you ask them what's happening or...?

Bhakta: Mhmm. Usually about 3 or 5 months to take []

Abby: 3 or 4 months for...?

Bhakta: You know how they [] to write a letter right?

Abby: Right.

Bhakta: So then it takes- I guess 20 days to come here right.

Abby: Oh yeah.

Bhakta: And then you know he talks and then he writes a letter back.

Abby: It's kind of hard like, do you call much over there?

Bhakta: No. It's too expensive to call there. Anyway my whole family is here so why- I don't know why I should call anyone over –

Abby: For your husband?!

Bhakta: Well his family [] that!

(laughs)

Bhakta: So he could call.

Abby: So can he call?

Bhakta: Huh? No he writes, he doesn't call.

Abby: When you first got to the United States, did you think of yourself still as an Indian American?

Bhakta: Huh? Indian what?

Abby: Yeah, American.

Bhakta: Indian American...

Abby: Yeah do you-

Bhakta: Oh American Indian you mean?

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: I- No.

Abby: Do you think of yourself-

Bhakta: Oh you mean the people, when I say like I'm Indian-

Abby: Like I'm Chinese American like-

Bhakta: uh huh-

Abby: I consider myself [Chinese American]

Bhakta: If I'm serious then I can say that. That I'm not a citizen.

Abby: Mhmm.

Bhakta: Like my dad he's a citizen.

Abby: But did you have a job?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Okay. So who's that one-

Bhakta: The little boy? That's my nephew.

Abby: Oh.

Bhakta: He comes and stays with us all the time.

Abby: Have you [] old country changed over time?

Bhakta: My old country changed...Mhmm.

Abby: What did this change? And what kind of change? What do you see as changing over there?

Bhakta: When I was there, it was a lot of changing, and everything like going you know, like a lot of [preedlings] and it was kind of getting crowded too. And see, when I was there you know, like, small, the girls didn't use to ride a bike- I mean you know, motorcycle. But now I see all the girls riding motorcycles. You know going to school and all that.

Abby: Oh that's [cool] yeah.

Bhakta: Yeah and it was nice. What else...

Abby: When did this change – when you went back, when was that?

Bhakta: '78.

Abby: How about the people? Have they changed?

Bhakta: The people changed too yeah.

Abby: With the [pods] or?

Bhakta: They kind of like a modernizing, you know.

Abby: [alright, you see that]

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Is there more like um. More American influence here or...?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: It's just their own, changes. No it's the outside influence more outside influence. It doesn't have to be American.

Bhakta: Well they changing, but I don't know what influence they have.

Abby: What do you make a person Indian or... American Indian?

Bhakta: What does... what? Person?

Abby: What makes a person?

Bhakta: What makes a person American Indian?

Abby: Mhmm. Like you say you didn't have your citizenship-

Bhakta: Yeah so you're not really like a citizen , I mean like you know, you're not American. Right? If I'm not a citizen.

Abby: Do you vote? You don't vote do you?

Bhakta: I'm not a citizen. Like my dad he is a citizen he could say, you know, that he's American Indian, like that.

Abby: Does he vote?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: To you, it would be getting a citizenship.

Bhakta: I don't know if I would want to be a citizen. I mean you know, I don't know, like my husband he wants to go back you know, over there.

Abby: To live?

Bhakta: Yeah huh.

Abby: So to you what would it be to be-

Bhakta: An American citizen.

Abby: Mhmm. Is there anything you would say.

Bhakta: nmMm.

Abby: You think you could probably stay as... Indian?

Bhakta: Of course I'm Indian (laughs) so I'm going to stay Indian. But I know I'm in here, I'm [].

Abby: Yeah same. Okay, do you return to [] come '78, what was it like there?

Bhakta: That's what I told you before that it was kind of changing you know.

Abby: Ah I think I already did that. Okay did people from your country try to live in the same [woods].

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: That we could all [] country. What was life in these neighborhoods like?

Bhakta: It's like, you know, their own family, I mean, you know like, neighborhood. They all come to the house and we share like food and everything and when they cook something they bring it to us like. When we do something [] give it to them like that.

Abby: Did you have a lot of visiting-

Bhakta: Yeah. A lot of them.

- Abby: What makes []
- Bhakta: What makes it?
- Abby: What makes part of the []
- Bhakta: Oh that's the part of customs that you have to [reel] it in and something like that. They just come, just a friend. It depends on the person and like if you were like mean, you know, I wouldn't go to your house, like you know, all the time. Like visiting and all that.
- Abby: But you talking about cousins, relatives, and people you know.
- Bhakta: Well everybody.
- Abby: Everybody there. Okay was there any other group, besides Hindus were in []-
- Bhakta: Mhmm.
- Abby: in your where you live?
- Bhakta: Yeah.
- Abby: Did you stick with just your Hindu people or do you-
- Bhakta: Oh no. See there's this uh, Hindi, it's a common, it's like English.
- Abby: Right.
- Bhakta: It's the main language okay? So usually everyone speaks that so even if you could draw [] speak your own different language and other person speaking [] so uh, you know it's [alright].
- Abby: Okay what kind of things did the parents of your neighborhood friends do for a living?
- Bhakta: What they do for a living? They usually work for a company, or they probably have their own business or something like that. Like my dad he was a- he used to like, I don't know you call but... like you know, he used to go out places uh transport somethings to other countries like that.
- Abby: Oh in truck?
- Bhakta: No he wasn't driving, when you know, they [] go someplace to let them see their own [stampos]-
- Abby: [Postmail]?
- Bhakta: []
- Abby: Did you neighbor ever try to do something about these things?

Bhakta: About what things?

Abby: Were there ever anything about these neighborhoods that were not so good for people living there?

Bhakta: Mmm I don't know about that. No.

Abby: Like a [busy] neighbor or uh... jobs, or family or, anything []

Bhakta: Huh?

Abby: How do you often [as an adult] relate to other [] backgrounds who's different.

Bhakta: ...

Abby: You looking at- okay, your country have you often felt []

Bhakta: I don't really... It's been a long time.

Abby: Have you ever felt this way against an [] background?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Okay, in your opinion, why you don't feel [discriminated]?

Bhakta: I don't know.

Abby: You just felt like you always people has been []?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Okay. Have you participated in an organization of []?

Bhakta: Didn't you ask that before?

Abby: This is like, from people from your country.

Bhakta: People from my country?

Abby: Mhmm.

Bhakta: What they do? Or what?

Abby: Like here- Like-

Bhakta: How I participate with them?

Abby: Yeah. No, you- okay. The community more or less. Where you lived. How you participated with an organization [] with them?

Bhakta: Oh in everything.

Abby: What kind would you- have?

- Bhakta: Oh, let's see, like dancing, we had our own dance. So that's what we do like it comes- This is a day that it comes, like once a year, so we get together and you know, dance. And we have our own picnic things and all the [Indians] and all that.
- Abby: What kind of dancing do you do?
- Bhakta: Just the dance... you go round in circles or something. All the girls and the guys.
- Abby: What kind of recreational activity do you enjoy?
- Bhakta: I like to... I like to go out, I mean, you know. I guess probably just [] but I'm not that good, but I play. I usually go out and eat. That's the only thing I can think of when []. Swimming? Oh no I hate that. I could go, I mean, 6 feet, no way. The 3 is alright. I would just stay there, but I would not go far.
- Abby: Wha-
- Bhakta: I'm always afraid of water. I can't even keep my eyes open in water. I don't know it burns-
- Abby: The chlorine-
- Bhakta: Yeah.
- Abby: that's what burns. Have you been [active] in your church.
- Bhakta: I never go to church.
- Abby: How about your community work []
- Bhakta: Oh well, no my mom does all that. Like you know, they get together all the ladies. They pray and all that things.
- Abby: Of this year though, have you ever worked part time?
- Bhakta: Yeah.
- Abby: Okay. Full time?
- Bhakta: Full time? Yeah.
- Abby: What was your part time?
- Bhakta: That's the one that I was working over there.
- Abby: When did you have your first [full] time job?
- Bhakta: That's the first job that I was working in the restaurant, I mean you know like [], the residence house.
- Abby: Did you work before marriage?
- Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Did you give up your job upon marriage?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: [] Did you enjoy working?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Like do you have lots of help with jobs for a long time?

Bhakta: Well this one is alright, but they're not []

Abby: [] What did you find most satisfying about working?

Bhakta: The work I'm doing right now? Oh it's nice. Like if something happens to me, the doctor is there right away, I could- I work with doctors, they know all my problems. It's nice to work with the doctors.

Abby: [Least] satisfying?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: What is the least satisfying?

Bhakta: I guess the pay too, it's alright. It's not that much work you gotta do. Sometimes it depends how many patients we have too.

Abby: Would you have worked if you have stayed in your country?

Bhakta: No I don't think so.

Abby: If you worked at the [United States] do you have any help at home with the chores?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: When you first held jobs, did it seem- only certain types of jobs were available? Your first job? [] or of your ethnic background [] seem to be some type of jobs?

Bhakta: []

Abby: Did you ever join a []?

Bhakta: No..

Abby: Did you take a- Okay, how did you meet your husband?

Bhakta: Um how did I meet my husband... Good question, I never met him (laughs)

Abby: Okay your parents met him right? Or-

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Okay are- his parents are from [another country]?

Bhakta: His parents? Yeah.

Abby: [] Were you still living at home when you had your marriage? []

Bhakta: [] No.

Abby: You were here?

Bhakta: Oh when this happened? I was here yeah.

Abby: Right um, could you tell me about- could you tell me how it happened?

Bhakta: Everyone knows how the Indians get married-

Abby: (laughs)

Bhakta: so that's not new. (laughs)

Abby: I could probably tell []. More or less, your parents arrangement yeah?

Bhakta: Yeah.. see?

Abby: I know. How did-

Bhakta: But like, if I don't like him, I can say 'no, I don't want to marry him'. I have rights to say... They don't force that's the good thing about it. They choose the guy, but they don't force you to get married.

Abby: How did they find-

Bhakta: How did they find the guy?

Abby: Yeah.

Bhakta: Oh a lot of ways, like you know, like some of my mom's relatives, or his relatives. Or somebody they just bring this whatever-

Abby: Bring it up during the talk the visiting-

Bhakta: Mhmm

Abby: []

Bhakta: []

Abby: What determines the age as to when you get married?

Bhakta: You mean certain age to get married-?

Abby: I know there is a certain age, but what determines when you do, when you decide to get married? There is no set age right?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Right, so what decides at 20 that you can get married?

Bhakta: Nothing! It just happens, like you know!

Abby: I mean some people wait longer right?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Or 18 or 19. It's just... the parents?

Bhakta: It depends sometimes, on the parents too, and I don't know. Like my sister, no one knew she was going to get married, the guy just came over and they like each other and then, you know, [] they would get married, and that was it. See? No one knew she was going to get married and []

Abby: Your parents start planning?

Bhakta: They start planning-

Abby: How far- how-

Bhakta: You mean how long they start planning [from]?

Abby: Yeah, right.

Bhakta: Um, I don't know.

Abby: Well it's also up to you like if you say 'I'm not really-

Bhakta: Yeah if they ask too, you know, I say 'I don't want to go get married' that's it. They cannot say- They cannot do anything.

Abby: Well what happens [] in [] she ran off. She didn't want to go with the guy.

Bhakta: Well she's married now, she married the Indian guy. She went over there, she's my []

Abby: (laughs) This is [Mercede] college?

Bhakta: [Mercede] college. Yeah.

Abby: Oh yeah, I know her.

Bhakta: You know her?

Abby: Oh yeah, I know her! (laughs)

Bhakta: [] You know she is related to us.

Abby: Oh really?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: []

Bhakta: She's related to my mom's side.

Abby: Oh really?

Bhakta: []

Abby: [] That's her.

Bhakta: How did you know her?

Abby: Because I went to the same college.

Bhakta: You did? And you know her huh?

Abby: She knows []

Bhakta: []

Abby: [] I'm going to shut this off-

[Tape shuts off]

Abby: How long was it after- [] did you ever meet him at all?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: How many times?

Bhakta: 3 times- 2 or 3 times.

Abby: Your parents- do they mind seeing...

Bhakta: Seeing who? My husband?

Abby: Yeah, before the marriage.

Bhakta: No, they didn't mind, they wanted me to get married with him []

Abby: How can a parents decide, you know, by look or-

Bhakta: The parents they look- they find out his background and all that okay. And if he's nice then they said it's alright you know, he tells us. [Accept to us], if you want to marry him or not. See he's not forcing us, like we have to marry him.

Abby: And you went over there to get married?

Bhakta: Yeah.

Abby: Did he come over here to come see you or did you go over there to get married?

Bhakta: I went there, with my mom and dad.

Abby: Isn't that- I thought it would be the opposite, that the guy came to meet the girl, no? You know what I mean?

Bhakta: He cannot come back- come here. I mean you know like he didn't [] anybody up here. I mean, how did he get [] or something?

Abby: Well like [], he's Indian. He went over there to um []. And his parents went with him. So it more or less, could be either way? Guy come over here, the girl come over there.

Bhakta: It's the same thing.

Abby: No it isn't! It costs money-

Bhakta: [] I mean, okay, they cannot come here- like how could they- In India, I mean, like, what you call this, you have to have a visa- [] visa here in the United States, you know like that. So I have to go over there to marry him and then that's how he can come here, see?

Abby: [] I get it. Yeah he went over there, it took like 3 months-

Bhakta: Because probably the girl couldn't come here. That's why he had to go there, if he goes there, and the girl was here, then the girl had to go over there.

Abby: I see. How long did it take him after you married- You came back right?

Bhakta: Yeah. []

Abby: How long was it before he could come?

Bhakta: Well he could come with me right away-

Abby: You kidding?

Bhakta: Yeah because, if everything is ready like- []

Abby: Right but if it's not?

Bhakta: If it's not it takes about, I don't know, 5 or 6 months?

Abby: Yeah that's right...[] Okay, you had a ceremony?

Bhakta: A wedding?

Abby: Yeah with the fancy [bit], was it elaborate?

Bhakta: Oh it was a big wedding.

- Abby: Did you have reception when he came over here?
- Bhakta: When he came here, he had everything over there.
- Abby: Yeah I know, but I meant for your cousin and relatives did you have a wedding reception here?-[]
- Bhakta: When I was married- On my wedding day, my brother he had a party up here, see? So a lot of people came here but, we weren't here. So that's what happened.
- Abby: Yeah []
- Bhakta: They had a party up here.
- Abby: Yeah they usually wait till you [] then have the party! No they did huh... Okay and you were 20 years old, okay. Was your decision to marry influenced by your family- Yes (laughs) What the- do you mind that? I guess not really, huh? Because you brought up []
- Bhakta: Yeah that's how we brought up. I still think it's right because, a lot of people they fall in love and then they get married and then end up getting divorced. A lot of them [low] marriages like that. I think ours is better.
- Abby: It could work both ways, I'll tell you-

[Tape shuts off]

- Abby: What did he do for a living when you married him?
- Bhakta: What did he do?
- Abby: Mhmm.
- Bhakta: He was a student. He just graduated from [], electrical engineering he finished [].
- Abby: Did he ever change jobs after that?
- Bhakta: No.
- Abby: What things did he do [] how did you feel about his working?
- Bhakta: How did I feel about his working?
- Abby: Yeah []
- Bhakta: Well he should work. That's why he went to college and all that [firm].
- Abby: How did your husband's job fare with the things that other men from your country did []?

Bhakta: I don't know about this.

Abby: [] compared to other people. Well you know like, you have a caste system [] How does that relate to, the status of the caste?

Bhakta: It's the same, it's not, I mean you know, we don't have it like that.

Abby: You still have the caste system?

Bhakta: Yeah, what do you mean like if you're rich or something []?

Abby: Well, yes, well your status as to what level of-

Bhakta: Where you stand?

Abby: Right, right.

Bhakta: Well my father in law, he's rich so you know, where he stands. So if his son is not doing anything, he won't be [down], he would be still up, you know.

Abby: But this is- the caste still exists...?

Bhakta: I guess so. []

Abby: After you married, how did the two of you make decisions?

Bhakta: Depends. We make a decision and we talk it over. []

Abby: How did you resolve your differences?

Bhakta: Well it's always a difference.

Abby: (laughs) Oh c'mon you can't say ' it's always a difference '!

Bhakta: Well, of course (laugh) You cannot agree in everything you know. There's always going to be a difference in some way.

Abby: But sometimes you both agreed?

Bhakta: Oh yeah, we agreed too.

Abby: But usually how is it resolved?

Bhakta: It ends uh

(phone rings, tape shuts off)

Abby: Wait you have to tell me how you resolve your problems.

Bhakta: [] I used to be in. [Get my way.]

Abby: So what you guys got [give in], how did the two of you divide your responsibilities?

Bhakta: Hmm, he has his own [].

Abby: [] Did your relationship with members of your own family change after you got married?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: Was this the []-

Bhakta: Mhmm, it's the same.

Abby: What were you [especially] proud of in running your home?

Bhakta: I'm not owning my home, this is my father's home. So I don't know how it's like to be, you know. I think it's more responsibilities you have and all [] if you own some []

Abby: []

Bhakta: Yeah, of course. If I have my own house... Everything I- what I want and what I do, I can do it, but...

Abby: What was your dad- your father, he probably doesn't [] how you clean up stuff like that.

Bhakta: Nu-uh

Abby: Pretty much you do what you [think you can do].

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Okay are you still in touch with him?

Bhakta: Mhmm.

Abby: Do you share problems [] Taking your family overall, how did it compare with other families of people from your country, and other families in Stockton.

Bhakta: Well this is uh [all the families situations].

Abby: Yeah that's really the main point. Family and people come over here. Okay think of your family overall, this is question number 24... [] page 9 [] But think of your family overall, how did it compare with other families of people from your country?

Bhakta: How did [] compare by the other families?-

Abby: You were living in the city in your country [] compared to here.

Bhakta: Oh compared to here and over there?

Abby: And other families-[]

Bhakta: Other families?

Abby: []

Bhakta: But over there it's like the same too, you know, they usually have their maid and all that.

Abby: Mhmm, they [] here in Stockton?

Bhakta: Here they were always talk about how it was nice over there and all that.

Abby: But the majority of your neighbors had more [] taking off the [] would you say you were happy? Really happy? Or not too happy the way your marriage life turned out?

Bhakta: I'm happy.

Abby: Can you explain?

Bhakta: Explain what? How come I'm happy? (laughs)

Abby: []

Bhakta: Why I'm happy, well he's a nice guy you know. But he [] does whatever I want (laughs)

Abby: So you don't have any regrets?

Bhakta: No.

Abby: [Thinking about your] life after you were first married, what did you expect to get out of life then? [] Were you expecting anything?

Bhakta: Yeah I was expecting him to work. (laughs) and get money.

Abby: I bet you he was probably expecting you to too. Was he expecting you to work too?

Bhakta: No. The wife you- He doesn't really care, if I work or not.

Abby: Does he mind that you don't-

Bhakta: But I don't- I wouldn't work.

Abby: Without the house [] in a way?

Bhakta: Well you know how Indian men, they don't do anything in the house.

Abby: Oh no. Yeah [] they do expect []

Bhakta: Yeah.

(laughs)

- Bhakta: A lot!
- Abby: Were you [] married to him [] ?
- Bhakta: I guess it's different, because he's living with my parents and when I get married, I was living with his parents see? So it's different now. I'm not living with my father-in-law. My mother-in-law, you know how it's different living with your in-laws like that. But my in-laws they were kind of- they were really modernized. More than my dad and mom. They were really nice.
- Abby: When you say modernized, they more up to the-
- Bhakta: They talk to us. Like, I'm a daughter-in-law okay?
- Abby: Uh-huh.
- Bhakta: Usually the Indians, the father-in-law- and okay usually like I don't sit with my father-in-law and talk to him about everything about that. Usually you hardly talk, but now, my father-in-law [] even at dinner we all sit in the table and eat our dinner at the same time. If one of them doesn't come, we have to wait for that one person. And it's really like, I could talk to him about anything with my father-in-law.
- Abby: Yeah that's- usually the opposite yeah.
- Bhakta: Usually the opposite but- yeah, they're different.
- Abby: Were the goals you had for your family different from your parents?
- Bhakta: Yeah, it's different. My family they owned a business, my husband didn't own a business... see?
- Abby: Would they one day, take over the business?
- Bhakta: Oh now I'm taking over it. Because my dad is out of the country, so me and my husband []
- Abby: [] Are they letting you do more than they did, when they were married? Family goals, [] difficult. So what kind of differences were there? Was there much of a difference?
- Bhakta: It's more, it's a lot different, I don't know what happened really. But they probably get married []. My mother didn't work, and I'm working see? She didn't have to work. She had a maid, I didn't have a maid.
- Abby: This is because of [what you are too?]
- Bhakta: Yeah, the place is different too, so.
- Abby: []

[TAPE END]

Timestamps to Specific Topics

Bhakta tape 1-

Home Life:

- Parents decisions, 28:10-30:43
- Not eating meat, 31:39-32: 30
- Ethnic friends, 35:38-36:47

Living in Stockton:

- Good things, 39:57-41:15

Bhakta tape 2-

Home Life:

- Staying with parents, 0:45-1:45
- School grading differences, 8:47-9:59
- Marriage, 31:10-33:25